Online Safety Policy



|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Approved by:** | Learning and Development Team | **Date:** 26.02.25 |
| **Last reviewed on:** | February 2025 |
| **Next review due by:** | February 2026 |

Online safety policy

# 1. Aims

Our school aims to:

* Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
* Identify and support groups of pupils that are potentially at greater risk of harm online than others
* Deliver an effective approach to online safety, which empowers us to protect and educate the whole school community in its use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’)
* Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate

**The 4 key categories of risk**

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

* **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
* **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
* **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
* **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

# 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2), and its advice for schools on:

* [Teaching online safety in schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools)
* [Preventing and tackling bullying](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying) and [cyber-bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying)
* [Searching, screening and confiscation](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation)
* RSE curriculum: online relationships

It also refers to the DfE’s guidance on [protecting children from radicalisation](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty). It reflects existing legislation, including but not limited to the [Education Act 1996](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents) (as amended), the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents) and the [Equality Act 2010](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents). In addition, it reflects the [Education Act 2011](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/contents/enacted), which has given teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by, if necessary, searching for and deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils’ electronic devices where they believe there is a ‘good reason’ to do so. The policy also takes into account the National Curriculum computing programmes of study.

# 3. Roles and responsibilities

**3.1 The governing board**

The governing board has overall responsibility for monitoring this policy and holding the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will make sure all staff undergo online safety training as part of child protection and safeguarding training, and ensure staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring.

The governing board will also make sure all staff receive regular online safety updates (via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required and at least annually, to ensure they are continually provided with the relevant skills and knowledge to effectively safeguard children.

The governing board will co-ordinate regular meetings with appropriate staff to discuss online safety, requirements for training, and monitor online safety logs as provided by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

The governing board should ensure children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including keeping safe online.

The governing board must ensure the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place on school devices and school networks and will regularly review their effectiveness. The board will review the [DfE’s filtering and monitoring standards](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges), and discuss with service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting the standards, which include:

* Identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems;
* Reviewing filtering and monitoring provisions at least annually;
* Blocking harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning;
* Having effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

All governors will:

* Ensure they have read and understand this policy
* Agree and adhere to the terms on acceptable use of the school’s ICT systems and the internet
* Ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme while devising and implementing their whole-school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and/or procedures
* Ensure that, where necessary, teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, is adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is because of the importance of recognising that a ‘one size fits all’ approach may not be appropriate for all children in all situations, and a more personalised or contextualised approach may often be more suitable

**3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that staff understand this policy, and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.

**3.3 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)**

The DSL takes lead responsibility for online safety in school, in particular:

* Ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently in school
* Working with the governing board to review this policy annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly
* Taking the lead on understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place on school devices and school networks
* Providing governors with assurance that filtering and monitoring systems are working effectively and reviewed regularly
* Working with the ICT providers to make sure the appropriate systems and processes are in place
* Working with the headteacher, ICT providers and other staff, as necessary, to address any online safety issues or incidents
* Managing all online safety issues and incidents in line with the school’s child protection policy
* Responding to safeguarding concerns identified by filtering and monitoring
* Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged using our online system (Netsweeper onGuard) and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy
* Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy
* Updating and delivering staff training on online safety
* Liaising with other agencies and/or external services if necessary
* Providing regular reports on online safety in school to the headteacher and/or governing board
* Undertaking annual risk assessments that consider and reflect the risks children face
* Providing regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

**3.4 The ICT providers**

The ICT manager is responsible for:

* Putting in place an appropriate level of security protection procedures, such as filtering and monitoring systems on school devices and school networks, which are reviewed and updated at least annually to assess effectiveness and ensure pupils are kept safe from potentially harmful and inappropriate content and contact online while at school, including terrorist and extremist material
* Ensuring that the school’s ICT systems are secure and protected against viruses and malware, and that such safety mechanisms are updated regularly
* Conducting a full security check and monitoring the school’s ICT systems
* Blocking access to potentially dangerous sites and, where possible, preventing the downloading of potentially dangerous files
* Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged and dealt with appropriately.
* Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy

**3.5 All staff and volunteers**

All staff, including contractors and agency staff, and volunteers are responsible for:

* Maintaining an understanding of this policy
* Implementing this policy consistently
* Agreeing and adhering to the terms on acceptable use of the school’s ICT systems and the internet and ensuring that pupils follow the school’s terms on acceptable use.
* Knowing that the DSL is responsible for the filtering and monitoring systems and processes, and being aware of how to report any incidents to the DSL or ADSL
* Following the correct procedures if they need to bypass the filtering and monitoring systems for educational purposes.
* Working with the DSL to ensure that any online safety incidents are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy
* Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy
* Responding appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or harassment, both online and offline, and maintaining an attitude of ‘it could happen here’

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

**3.6 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

* Notify a member of staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding this policy
* Ensure their child has read, understood and agreed to the terms on acceptable use of the school’s ICT systems and internet (appendices 1 and 2)

Parents/carers can seek further guidance on keeping children safe online from the following organisations and websites:

* What are the issues? – [UK Safer Internet Centre](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/what-are-issues)
* Online safety topics for parents/carers – [Childnet](https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/parents-and-carers)
* Parent resource sheet – [Childnet](https://www.childnet.com/resources/parents-and-carers-resource-sheet/)

**3.7 Visitors and members of the community**

Visitors and members of the community who use the school’s ICT systems or internet will be made aware of this policy and expected to read and follow it. If appropriate, they will be expected to agree to the terms on acceptable use (appendix 3).

4. Educating pupils about online safety

Pupils will be taught about online safety as part of the curriculum:

**All** schools have to teach:

* [Relationships education and health education](https://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com/uid/8b76f587-7bf6-4994-abf0-43850c6e8d73/) in primary schools

In **Key Stage KS1**, pupils will be taught to:

* Use technology safely and respectfully, keeping personal information private
* Identify where to go for help and support when they have concerns about content or contact on the internet or other online technologies

Pupils in **Key Stage KS2** will be taught to:

* Use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly
* Recognise acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
* Identify a range of ways to report concerns about content and contact
* Be discerning in evaluating digital content

By the **end of primary school**, pupils will know:

* That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
* That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online, including when we are anonymous
* The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
* How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
* How information and data is shared and used online
* What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers/others (including in a digital context)
* How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
* The benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others’ mental and physical wellbeing
* How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private
* Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online

Where necessary, teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, will be adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some pupils with SEND.

# 5. Educating parents/carers about online safety

The school will raise parents/carers’ awareness of internet safety in letters or other communications home, and in information via our website or remote learning policy. This policy will also be shared with parents/carers.

Online safety will also be covered during parents’ evenings.

The school will let parents/carers know:

* What systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use
* What their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the school (if anyone) their child will be interacting with online

If parents/carers have any queries or concerns in relation to online safety, these should be raised in the first instance with the headteacher and/or the DSL.

Concerns or queries about this policy can be raised with any member of staff or the headteacher.

# 6. Cyber-bullying

**6.1 Definition**

Cyber-bullying takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites. Like other forms of bullying, it is the repetitive, intentional harming of 1 person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. (See also the school behaviour policy.)

**6.2 Preventing and addressing cyber-bullying**

To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. We will ensure that pupils know how they can report any incidents and are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than the victim.

The school will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be. Class teachers will discuss cyber-bullying with their tutor groups.

Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyber-bullying. This includes personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, and other subjects where appropriate.

All staff, governors and volunteers (where appropriate) receive training on cyber-bullying, its impact and ways to support pupils, as part of safeguarding training (see section 11 for more detail).

The school also sends information/leaflets on cyber-bullying to parents/carers so they are aware of the signs, how to report it and how they can support children who may be affected.

In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, the school will follow the processes set out in the school behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained.

The DSL will report the incident and provide the relevant material to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable, if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that possessing that material is illegal. They will also work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

**6.3 Handing in of any electronic devices/mobile phones**

It is the school’s policy that all electronic devices/mobile phones are handed into the office and collected at the end of the day. This ensures that they are safe from damage and cannot be used inappropriately whilst on the school site.

**6.4 Artificial intelligence (AI)**

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.

Weald School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

The school will treat any use of AI to bully pupils very seriously, in line with our anti-bullying/behaviour policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out a risk assessment where new AI tools are being used.

# 7. Acceptable use of the internet in school

All pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the school’s ICT systems and the internet (appendices 1 to 3). Visitors will be expected to read and agree to the school’s terms on acceptable use if relevant.

Use of the school’s internet must be for educational purposes only, or for the purpose of fulfilling the duties of an individual’s role.

We will monitor the websites visited by pupils, staff, volunteers, governors and visitors (where relevant) to ensure they comply with the above and restrict access through filtering systems where appropriate.

# 8. Pupils using mobile devices in school

Pupils may bring mobile devices to school for safety if they walk, but are not permitted to use them onsite.

# 9. Staff using work devices outside school

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes, but is not limited to:

* Keeping the device password-protected – strong passwords can be made up of [three random words](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/top-tips-for-staying-secure-online/three-random-words), in combination with numbers and special characters if required, or generated by a password manager
* Ensuring their hard drive is encrypted – this means if the device is lost or stolen, no one can access the files stored on the hard drive by attaching it to a new device
* Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time
* Not sharing the device among family or friends
* Keeping anti-virus and anti-spyware software up to date.
* Keeping operating systems up to date by always installing the latest updates

Staff members must not use the device in any way that would violate the school’s terms of acceptable use, as set out in appendix 3.

Work devices must be used solely for work activities.

If staff have any concerns over the security of their device, they must seek advice from our IT provider (carbon cloud)

# 10. How the school will respond to issues of misuse

Where a pupil misuses the school’s ICT systems or internet, we will follow the procedures set out in our behaviour policy. The action taken will depend on the individual circumstances, nature and seriousness of the specific incident, and will be proportionate.

Where a staff member misuses the school’s ICT systems or the internet or misuses a personal device where the action constitutes misconduct, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the staff disciplinary actions. The action taken will depend on the individual circumstances, nature and seriousness of the specific incident.

The school will consider whether incidents that involve illegal activity or content, or otherwise serious incidents, should be reported to the police.

# 11. Training

**11.1 Staff, governors and volunteers**

All new staff members will receive training, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues, including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation.

All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year as part of safeguarding training, as well as relevant updates as required (for example through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

By way of this training, all staff will be made aware that:

* Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, and that children are at risk of online abuse
* Children can abuse their peers online through:
* Abusive, threatening, harassing and misogynistic messages
* Non-consensual sharing of images and/or videos, especially around chat groups
* Sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don’t want to receive such content
* Physical abuse, sexual violence and initiation/hazing type violence can all contain an online element

Training will also help staff:

* Develop better awareness to assist in spotting the signs and symptoms of online abuse
* Develop the ability to ensure pupils can recognise dangers and risks in online activity and can weigh up the risks
* Develop the ability to influence pupils to make the healthiest long-term choices and keep them safe from harm in the short term

The DSL and DDSL will undertake child protection and safeguarding training, which will include online safety, at least every 2 years. They will also update their knowledge and skills on the subject of online safety at regular intervals, and at least annually.

Governors will receive training on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues as part of their safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training and updates, if applicable.

More information about safeguarding training is set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

**11.2 Pupils**

All pupils will receive age-appropriate training on safe internet use, including:

* Methods that hackers use to trick people into disclosing personal information
* Password security
* Social engineering
* The risks of removable storage devices (e.g. USBs)
* Multi-factor authentication
* How to report a cyber incident or attack
* How to report a personal data breach

Pupils will also receive age-appropriate training on safeguarding issues such as cyberbullying and the risks of online radicalisation.

# 12. Monitoring arrangements

The DSL/DDSL logs behaviour and safeguarding issues related to online safety. An incident report log can be found using our online filtering system Netsweeper onGuard.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the DSL/Headteacher and Governors. The review will be supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks pupils face online. This is important because technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly.

 13. Links with other policies

This online safety policy is linked to our:

* Child protection and safeguarding policy
* Behaviour policy
* Staff disciplinary procedures
* Data protection policy and privacy notices
* Complaints procedure
* ICT and internet acceptable use policy
* SRE policy

# Appendix 1: EYFS and KS1 acceptable use agreement (pupils and parents/carers)

| Acceptable use of the school’s ICT systems and internet: agreement for pupils and parents/carers |
| --- |
| **Name of pupil:** |
| **When I use the school’s ICT systems (like computers) and get onto the internet in school I will:*** Ask a teacher or adult if I can do so before using them
* Only use websites that a teacher or adult has told me or allowed me to use
* Tell my teacher immediately if:
	+ I select a website by mistake
	+ I receive messages from people I don’t know
	+ I find anything that may upset or harm me or my friends
* Use school computers for school work only
* Be kind to others and not upset or be rude to them
* Look after the school ICT equipment and tell a teacher straight away if something is broken or not working properly
* Only use the username and password I have been given
* Try my hardest to remember my username and password
* Never share my password with anyone, including my friends
* Never give my personal information (my name, address or telephone numbers) to anyone without the permission of my teacher or parent/carer
* Save my work on the school network
* Check with my teacher before I print anything
* Log off or shut down a computer when I have finished using it

**I agree that the school will monitor the websites I visit and that there will be consequences if I don’t follow the rules.** |
| **Signed (pupil):** | **Date:** |
| **Parent/carer agreement**: I agree that my child can use the school’s ICT systems and internet when appropriately supervised by a member of school staff. I agree to the conditions set out above for pupils using the school’s ICT systems and internet, and will make sure my child understands these. |
| **Signed (parent/carer):**  | **Date:** |

# Appendix 2: KS2 acceptable use agreement (pupils and parents/carers)

| Acceptable use of the school’s ICT systems and internet: agreement for pupils and parents/carers |
| --- |
| **Name of pupil:** |
| **I will read and follow the rules in the acceptable use agreement policy.****When I use the school’s ICT systems (like computers) and get onto the internet in school I will:*** Always use the school’s ICT systems and the internet responsibly and for educational purposes only
* Only use them when a teacher is present, or with a teacher’s permission
* Keep my usernames and passwords safe and not share these with others
* Keep my private information safe at all times and not give my name, address or telephone number to anyone without the permission of my teacher or parent/carer
* Tell a teacher (or sensible adult) immediately if I find any material that might upset, distress or harm me or others
* Always log off or shut down a computer when I’ve finished working on it

**I will not:*** Access any inappropriate websites including: social networking sites, chat rooms and gaming sites unless my teacher has expressly allowed this as part of a learning activity
* Open any attachments in emails, or follow any links in emails, without first checking with a teacher
* Use any inappropriate language when communicating online, including in emails
* Create, link to or post any material that is pornographic, offensive, obscene or otherwise inappropriate
* Log in to the school’s network using someone else’s details
* Arrange to meet anyone offline without first consulting my parent/carer, or without adult supervision

**If I bring a personal mobile phone or other personal electronic device into school:*** I will not use it during lessons, tutor group time, clubs or other activities organised by the school, without a teacher’s permission
* I will use it responsibly, and will not access any inappropriate websites or other inappropriate material or use inappropriate language when communicating online

**I agree that the school will monitor the websites I visit and that there will be consequences if I don’t follow the rules.** |
| **Signed (pupil):** | **Date:** |
| **Parent/carer’s agreement:** I agree that my child can use the school’s ICT systems and internet when appropriately supervised by a member of school staff. I agree to the conditions set out above for pupils using the school’s ICT systems and internet, and for using personal electronic devices in school, and will make sure my child understands these. |
| **Signed (parent/carer):** | **Date:** |

# Appendix 3: acceptable use agreement (staff, governors, volunteers and visitors)

| Acceptable use of the school’s ICT systems and internet: agreement for staff, governors, volunteers and visitors |
| --- |
| **Name of staff member/governor/volunteer/visitor:** |
| **When using the school’s ICT systems and accessing the internet in school, or outside school on a work device (if applicable), I will not:*** Access, or attempt to access inappropriate material, including but not limited to material of a violent, criminal or pornographic nature (or create, share, link to or send such material)
* Use them in any way that could harm the school’s reputation
* Access social networking sites or chat rooms
* Use any improper language when communicating online, including in emails or other messaging services
* Install any unauthorised software, or connect unauthorised hardware or devices to the school’s network
* Share my password with others or log in to the school’s network using someone else’s details
* Take photographs of pupils without checking with teachers first
* Share confidential information about the school, its pupils or staff, or other members of the community
* Access, modify or share data I’m not authorised to access, modify or share
* Promote private businesses, unless that business is directly related to the school
 |
| I will only use the school’s ICT systems and access the internet in school, or outside school on a work device, for educational purposes or for the purpose of fulfilling the duties of my role.I agree that the school will monitor the websites I visit and my use of the school’s ICT facilities and systems.I will take all reasonable steps to ensure that work devices are secure and password-protected when using them outside school, and keep all data securely stored in accordance with this policy and the school’s data protection policy.I will let the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and ICT manager know if a pupil informs me they have found any material that might upset, distress or harm them or others, and will also do so if I encounter any such material.I will always use the school’s ICT systems and internet responsibly, and ensure that pupils in my care do so too. |
| **Signed (staff member/governor/volunteer/visitor):** | **Date:** |

# Appendix 4: online safety training needs – self-audit for staff

| online safety training needs audit |
| --- |
| **Name of staff member/volunteer:**  | **Date**: |
| **Question** | **Yes/No (add comments if necessary)** |
| Do you know the name of the person who has lead responsibility for online safety in school? |  |
| Are you aware of the ways pupils can abuse their peers online?  |  |
| Do you know what you must do if a pupil approaches you with a concern or issue? |  |
| Are you familiar with the school’s acceptable use agreement for staff, volunteers, governors and visitors? |  |
| Are you familiar with the school’s acceptable use agreement for pupils and parents/carers? |  |
| Are you familiar with the filtering and monitoring systems on the school’s devices and networks? |  |
| Do you understand your role and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring? |  |
| Do you regularly change your password for accessing the school’s ICT systems? |  |
| Are you familiar with the school’s approach to tackling cyber-bullying? |  |
| Are there any areas of online safety in which you would like training/further training? |  |

#